

PEOPLE & THINGS By ATTICUS

LET us speed the dreary month of November to its approaching end with good news. The rebellion (led by Mr. Hamish Hamilton, the publisher) against the "Gibbet lamps" in St. John's Wood has been crowned with almost complete success. The appropriately enlightened Borough Council of Marylebone has decreed that only in the main thoroughfares will the yellow-faced lamp standards be erected.

In all other streets and lanes and avenues there will be lamps that shed a gentle blue tinge. If now the St. John's Woodmen were to raise a statue to Hamish, the Liberator, the memorial might take the form of the hero reading one of his own books beneath the blue lights of the compromise lamps.

Now the glare of controversy passes to Paddington, where the residents of Newton Road have offered to pay the difference in cost between the lamps they want and the lamps they detest.

Cleaner Travel

THE march of progress is not confined to the realm of light. Too little attention has been paid to the glorious victory of progress at the American Embassy in London. At last Washington has agreed that British visitors to the U.S.A. will no longer need to have their finger-prints taken. This quaint process will be applied only to British emigrants intending to take up residence in the U.S.A. No longer will those of us who visit America from time to time have to wash and re-wash until we feel, like Lady Macbeth, that our hands will never be clean again.

Canadian Visitor

NOW let us praise a powerful friend in the person of James Stuart Duncan, C.M.G., vice-chairman of the Canadian trade mission now in London. He was born in Paris sixty-four years ago but has spent most of his vigorous life in Canada. Among other things he is chairman of the Ontario Hydro Electric Power Company.

But Mr. Duncan is not a man whose energies can be confined to one sphere. He served with the Royal Field Artillery in the first war, and was deputy Minister for Air in the Hitler war. In fact, it would fill this

column to note all the posts that he has filled in politics, business and of education.

He believes that Canada and Britain should greatly increase their mutual trade, a point on which I am confident that our elegant President of the Board of Trade agrees with him. More and more the Dominion of Canada looms up as "Tomorrow's Giant."

Penny Coloured

ONE of the portraits at the Royal Portrait Society's exhibition which attracted much attention when I went to the Private View is Edward Halliday's portrait of Sir Winston Churchill. While I admired the portrait yet it seemed to me that the Garter robes detracted from its effect.

To put it in the vernacular, the noble garments fail to "do anything" for the great man. Despite his youthful military adventures and his joy in wearing official costumes Winston Churchill is supremely a politician and a civilian. A coronet would not add to his dignity, and the perfect portrait of him would be in an ordinary dark suit as the supreme commoner of his time, standing at the despatch-box with a diamond-pointed phrase ready to be thrown at the Opposition Bench.

Interpreter

THAT tall, balding, vital personality, Henry Kerby, M.P., who acted as Parliamentary interpreter during the London visit of Messrs. Bulganin and Khrushchev, has just returned from a visit to Russia. Mr. Kerby is a man of vast energy who speaks forcefully and thinks violently. When on odd occasions he laughs even the Thames joins in the chuckle.

It would seem that in Russia every man in the hierarchy works on a basis of "Success or else." Not even loyalty to the Old Red Tie saves an official who fails to achieve the task set before him. According to Mr. Kerby the scientific progress of Russia has not been exaggerated. The Man in the Moon had better look out.

Singing Jesuit

SINCE he composed his first song on the back of a motorcycle as an infantryman in Syria, Père Aymé Duval, the thirty-nine-year-old Jesuit from Lorraine who regularly fills the Palais des Sports with

an enthusiastic audience for his music, has become one of the top recording stars in France.

Short, wiry, white-faced and wearing a black zipped wind-cheater, he is in London for a few days to rehearse his part in the Lourdes centenary celebrations at the Albert Hall next February. He tells me that most of the £40,000 he earned from the three records he made last year went to the home he supports for young apprentices at the Peugeot car factory.

"After all, money is no use to me. I am a missionary of joy. I travel France, singing in the *estaminets*. I don't want to



PERE DUVAL

make men Catholics—I just want to make them joyful." Père Duval's one regular relaxation is reading Agatha Christie.

His ambition at the moment is to train four or five other young guitarists to travel France with him. What are the chief influences in his songs? I asked him. Most of them come, he said, from the *ballades* he learnt as a child. But he also admires Piaf and Yves Montand. "My songs have joy," he says. "Theirs have truth."

Big Stuff

HOW do you sell a £15-million power station? Mr. Roger Vaughan, a remarkable young Australian who as chief engineer of the Nuclear Power Plant Company was one of the key men in the negotiations that led to last week's Italian order for a nuclear reactor, tells me that it took many months and called for countless journeys and drawings and endless good faith.

He was able to model many of his plans on the drawings he had previously made for the construction of the nuclear power station at Bradwell in Essex, but he also had to spend many months teaching the Italian engineers the principles behind the equipment he was hoping to sell them. It is typical of the quiet efficiency of his work that, although the deal was settled only last week, the local evening institute near his office in Cheshire is already running two classes in Italian for the engineers he will take with him.

A Brogue Untrammelled

IT is hard to believe that the galloping major, friend and A.D.C. of the Duke of Windsor, whom everybody knew as "Fruity" Metcalfe was seventy years of age when he died last week. He changed very little in the trail of the years. Certainly his Irish brogue was as unalterable as his sense of adventure. In fact, "Fruity" always gave the impression of being a professional Irishman determined to avoid any deterioration of his native speech through contact with the English.

He was an inveterate talker. It is told of him that after a golf match he said to his opponent, Lord Castlerosse: "What did I go round in?" Castlerosse looked at the card and then

answered: "You went around in 40,000 words."

He was a good friend in all weathers. That would not be a bad epitaph for any man.

Floating Doctor

A DIFFERENT type of Irishman, except in volubility, is my old friend Dr. Joseph Maguire who has retired from his long professional association with those famous ocean liners known as "The Elizabeth" and "The Mary." He began his medical career by patching up Irish patriots and Black and Tans during the "Troubles."

But a doctor at sea must be more than a medical practitioner. Dr. Maguire tells me that a ship's doctor has to be a psychologist, philosopher and confessor. "The sea does something to people," he assured me.

His adventures, however, were not confined to pleasure or business crossings. When the war came the "Queens" were of immense importance. In his book he describes how the "Queen Elizabeth," haunted and hunted by submarines, carried 15,000 men on each run from New York to the Clyde. If she had been torpedoed the horrors would have outstripped imagination.

Doctor Maguire is one of those rare men who talk as they write and write as they talk. In either capacity he is rare company.

Bicentenary Bust

SIR JACOB EPSTEIN'S bronze bust of William Blake will be unveiled this evening in Westminster Abbey by Dr. Ralph Vaughan Williams, as part of the Blake bicentenary celebrations.

Epstein had little to go on except a life mask in the National Portrait Gallery and a few contemporary sketches. He was delighted with the commission, a friend tells me: "he never stops quoting Blake."

His interest in the poet is shared by a curious variety of people. Numbers of rich Americans are visiting England for the bicentenary celebrations; Japan has produced a spectacular Blake bicentenary magazine (in Japanese), and a special lecture is being given today on All-India Radio.

Blakiana

Blake, out of fashion and academic favour for almost a century, is now the object of a surge of international enthusiasm. Dr. Bronowski wrote a Penguin about him, and at the other end of the scale the Blake Trust are producing exquisite facsimiles of his work for about £30 each; this year they are bringing out his Biblical pictures.

Basil Wright has directed a thirty-minute colour film of Blake's works, under the aegis of the British Film Institute, the Arts Council and the British Council, and it is hoped that this will be shown in London this year. It is all a far cry from the days when William Blake's public recognition hardly went beyond the adoption of "Jerusalem" as the national song of the Women's Institutes.

People and Words

Measured in terms of valuable human lives, aviation is a ruthless taskmaster.

—THE BISHOP OF BRISTOL.

As Home Secretary I deal with such diverse subjects as marriage reform, wild birds, and vice. They don't mix very well together, but there are certain affinities from time to time.

—MR. R. A. BUTLER.

I don't believe in anger or hate or revenge—they are such exhausting emotions.

—MISS INGRID BERGMAN.

I have never discovered a place in this island where anybody is permitted to park. I sometimes wonder whether we shall end up living in trees, or at the bottom of ponds, or in perpetual motion like a Sputnik.

—MR. JACOB EPSTEIN